सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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"STILL SILENTLY WORKING"

By work we will defeat the enemy of Master: by still silently working.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Some of the most important contributions to the turning of the Wheel of Life are silent ones. In silence the crystals grow, the snowflakes fall. In silence the tree develops from the seed, in silence weaves its pale green robes of spring, in silence pushes forth its buds and brings forth flowers and fruits that hold seeds for the morrow's orchards. Within the egg's snug shell or the mother's sheltering womb, the future form of bird or beast or man develops silently.

Not altogether other is the silent increase, within the quickened personal consciousness, of the Spiritual Ego's influence. And not unrelated either is the turning of the Wheel of the Law by each according to his ability and the depth of his compassion, the sharing of what we have been able, each in his measure, to learn and to apply of the Teachings which give hope and comfort, life and light.

An important form of silent service — a very necessary one if we are to interpret our teachings correctly to others, whether by example or by voice or pen — is to *study* them faithfully, with unselfish motive. The better we have understood and assimilated the basic teachings of Theosophy, the more simply we can put them. Theosophy has an inspiring message for all, not only for the metaphysician but also for the simple, not highly educated minds -- a message which we should not deny to any but which we cannot pass on accurately unless we know the Teachings thoroughly.

But knowing what Theosophy teaches and trying to apply it is not enough. The injunction to seek out him who knows still less than ourselves and to "let him hear the Law" does not, of course, imply degrading Truth by forcing it upon unwilling ears, but in our daily contacts how many opportunities there are, if we are alert to perceive them, to drop a thought that brings peace, a word that may lead to inquiry! And we are told: "If you can help elevate or teach but one soul — that is a good beginning."

A Master once wrote that They were not especially anxious to hav anyone work for Them "except with entire spontaneity." Just a however, we are told that if we want to know Them we must stud Their Philosophy, so if we want to serve Them we must serve The Humanity. Certainly one who feels no urge to serve the "Great Orphan has not been deeply touched by Theosophy, however great its appe to his intellect may be.

> He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the Rac whether he himself fails or not, is bound fast by his own personalit and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself* an not that body which he now occupies.

If we are very conscious of our limitations and fear to offer hel to others, let us not overlook the power of noble thought. Are we n told that a man could be confined in a prison and still be a worke for the Cause? Mr. Judge tells us that

> if unselfishly and earnestly we think *Theosophy,* and desire that othe should, like us, be benefited by it, then to the minds we meet in stra moments of the day and in many hours of the night we cry "Theo ophy," and "Help and hope for thee." The result must be an awaker ing of interest upon the slightest provocative occasion.

"No man," H.P.B. has written, "is required to carry a burde heavier than he can bear; nor do more than it is possible for him to do What student of Theosophy is unable at least to correct the mi apprehensions of others as to what Theosophy is and stands for? An no matter what our limitations, each can at least work to the end making himself in every way as good an instrument for any sort work as he can. Mr. Judge had found every little thing he had ev learned to be of use in Theosophical work.

There is never a lack of Theosophical work to do and the mo the Associates participate in it the stronger will be the bond betwe them, and the more vital the work of the centre. Nevertheless t factor of self-energization is always necessary. In practice, the burde falls chiefly on the few, not because they feel themselves eminent fit but because the work is there to be done and not enough peop have offered their services. True student-servers can do the best so of work without expecting recognition or reward; they are full of t fire of devotion and have the right basis and a sure and solid one. Th can work unitedly with all who, like themselves, feel for the Caus without trying to impose on others their own precise methods Theosophical work, because they recognize the importance of M Judge's statement in "Methods of Theosophical Work" that "ea man is a potency in himself, and only by working on the lines whi suggest themselves to him can he bring to bear the forces that are his

Within the lines laid down by Theosophical ethics and also

the Declaration of the United Lodge of Theosophists, methods of work may differ but harmony can and should prevail. We are not asked to work blindly, but we are called upon to work unitedly, heeding Mr. Judge's stress on the need for mutual love and trust, and his reminder that "it is easy to do well by those we like, it is our duty to make ourselves do and think well by those we do not like." "The work must not fail because here and there personalities fall, and sin, and are unwise."

Let none of us prove ourselves to be of the class to whom Madame Blavatsky applied the epithet, "well-wishers but weak doers." Good words and good intentions are not enough. Deeds are what the Masters expect from those who profess themselves Their followers. Today, as when Mr. Judge was writing some 70 years ago or more, it is true that

> just now the best and biggest work by us poor children is on this plane with the great aid of Master, Whose simple single will keeps the whole organization, and acts as its support and shield.

And, as he told a correspondent reassuringly,

> attacks cannot hurt, they must needs come, but all we have to do is to keep right on, working steadily, and Masters will see after the rest. For, that which is done in Their name will come right. . . . we go forth separately once more, again to the work, if even not to meet until another incarnation is ours. But meeting then, we shall be all the stronger for having kept faith now.

Again and again the idea recurs that this is Masters' work in which we are privileged to help as humble companions, and that the results are in stronger hands than ours, and we are warned against managing, precipitating and forcing. The Master will manage results. The present effort, Mr. Judge reminds us, "is really the culmination of the work of ages, and it would be a poor thing, indeed, if the Lodge had to depend alone on our puny efforts." So we have only to go on and "leave the rest to time and the Lodge." "I have found," he wrote, "that work tells." Our own duty may be hard to find out, but we must make the effort and, no matter how small that duty may be, we must attend to that. Mr. Judge writes:—

> . . . all we can do, whether great or small, is to do just what we can, each in his proper place. It is sure that if we have an immense devotion and do our best, the result will be right for Them and us, even though we would have done otherwise had we known more when we were standing on a course of action.

"Let us all," therefore, "be as silent as we may be, and work, work; for as the enemy rages, they waste time, while work shines forth after all is over, and we will see that as they fought we were building."

"WHERE THOUGHT CAN PASS THEY CAN COME"

Many Western readers of *Isis Unveiled,* learning of the Eastern Adepts with whom H. P. Blavatsky claimed "intimate acquaintance," have longed to journey Eastward, overlooking what she has said in the same work, that such Adepts, in whose number our Theosophical Mahatmas must be included, may be seen without being recognized. She adds that "they may be found everywhere, but make themselves known only to those who have devoted their lives to unselfish study, and are not likely to turn back." (Vol. I, p. 17)

Motive is the essential test. The Masters have no interest in proving Their powers or the very fact of Their existence to the sceptical. Nor have those who covet knowledge so that they may have greater personal satisfaction, name and fame, any greater claim on the attention of Those whose every effort is devoted to the good of mankind as a whole.

> And yet at every hour of each day these Masters are willing and anxious to meet those who are clear-eyed enough to see their true destiny, and noble-hearted so as to work for "the great orphan, Humanity." (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita,* p. 52)

Mr. Judge has written of his full confidence that "at all times They help and try to aid us as far as we will let Them." They cannot help us, however, unless we furnish the conditions, "and a mere desire is not the needed condition. The new condition calls for a change in thought and nature." (*Letters That Have Helped Me,* p. 76)

"First DESERVE, then desire" has been named as "the very first most cardinal condition of personal intercourse with our teachers . . the key-note always." H.P.B. demanded of aspirants to the Masters notice who were feeling unjustifiably disappointed and aggrieved, "Have you fulfilled *your* obligations . . . have you *led the life* requisite, and the conditions required from one who becomes a candidate?" (*Raja Yoga or Occultism,* second ed., p. 13)

It is very natural that earnest students who respond to the Theosophical Teachings from the first with the inner confirmation, "That is true," should, no sooner than they have heard or read of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, most ardently desire to find Them doubting not their own readiness to pass any tests or to make any sacrifices required. They may well feel that their instantaneous response to the ideal of Masters might point to frustrated longings or interrupted beginnings in other lives. Perhaps they had chosen before but had not "cleaved"; or, as Krishna in the Sixth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* promises to him whose devotion has been broken off by death, are coming again in contact with knowledge which belonged to them in a former body. Yet each, whatever his innate capacity for

acquiring occult knowledge and power, "has to pass the self-same tests and probations, and go through the same self-training as any less endowed fellow aspirant."

To overestimate the boon of direct relations with the Blessed Masters would be impossible, but to underestimate the requirements for such relations would be unwise. Even working for merit under the observation of a Master, which is what lay-chelaship confers, is an inestimable privilege. A hint of the requirements is given by H.P.B. in the article "Lodges of Magic" from which our title is taken: "... time and space are no barriers between them and the aspirant; where thought can pass they can come." (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, second ed., p. 40)

It is not true, as might be assumed, that thought so pure and refined as Theirs can easily pass anywhere. The turbidity of our own sphere may interpose a barrier. There is more than a hint of barriers in the naming of the prerequisites for psychic development — "a pure place, pure diet, pure companionship and a pure mind." Pure spiritual influences can approach those whose souls are in close union with their spirits, whose lives are righteous and saintly and who practise frequent interior contemplation. Such individuals radiate an atmosphere of divine beneficence around them.

"I can come nearer to you," wrote the Master K.H. to a correspondent, "but you must draw me by a purified heart and a gradually developing will. Like the needle the adept follows his attractions." And in the same letter He wrote:—

> If you hear seldom from me, never feel disappointed, my Brother, but say — "It is *my* fault." Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy.... thought runs swifter than the electric fluid, and your thought *will find me* if projected by a pure impulse, as mine will find, has found, and often impressed upon your mind.

It was said in an unsigned editorial in *The Theosophist* for October 1883 (Vol. V, p. 1) that

> merely the ... law of attraction and repulsion keeps Adepts and the reeking stew of social corruption far apart. Sometimes, under very favourable conditions they may approach an individual devoted to occult research, but this happens rarely; for even he, pure though he be, is wallowing in the world's corrupt *akasa* or magnetic aura and contaminated by it. To his inner self it is as stifling and deadly as the heavy vapour of carbonic oxide to his physical lungs. And, remember, it is by the inner, not the outer, self that we come into relations with Adepts and their advanced Chelas. One would not expect to hold improving conversation with a besotted inebriate, lying in a state of swine-like stupefaction after a debauch; yet it is quite as impracticable for the spiritualized Mahatma to exchange thoughts with a man of

society, living daily in a state of *psychic intoxication* among the magnetic fumes of carnality, materialism and spiritual atrophy.

Magnetic emanations may be affected not only by intoxicants but even by promiscuous social relations. They constitute physical and material obstacles to contact with the Masters, though not necessarily insuperable ones if the individual is otherwise deserving of help. In a letter received by another correspondent, the same Master wrote: "Though I have no right to confer favours, I may give advice to whomsoever needs and deserves it."

But the Masters will *never* go outside Their laws. "The *Mahatmas are the servants, not the arbiters of the law of Karma.*" The Master K.H. wrote:—

> ... *you alone* have to weave your destiny.... Believe me: we may yet walk along the arduous path together. We may yet meet: but if at all, it has to be along and *on* — those "adamantine rocks with which our occult rules surround us" — never *outside* them.

And again:—

> ... duty, let me tell you, is for us, stronger than any friendship or even love; as without this abiding principle which is the indestructible cement that has held together for so many millenniums, the scattered custodians of nature's grand secrets — our Brotherhood, nay, our doctrine itself — would have crumbled long ago into unrecognizable atoms.

More serious obstacles to relations with the Masters than the physical and material impediments named above are superstitious beliefs. The Masters will not interfere with erroneous but sincere beliefs in the gods of the bigoted religions and sects, which attract destructive influences around the believers. The Master M. said in the same letter in which this was stated:—

> It is useless ... to argue "I am one of a pure life, I am a teetotaller and an abstainer from meat and vice. All my aspirations are for good, etc." and he, at the same time, building by his acts and deeds an impassable barrier on the road between himself and us.... There are 100 of thousands of Fakirs, Sannyasis and Sadhus leading the most pure lives, and yet being as they are, on the path of *error,* never having had an opportunity to meet, see or even hear of us.

The clouds that veil from us Their light, then, are of our own making. The Sun is always shining, but clouds in the earth's own atmosphere can dim or hide its light. Devotion and aspiration no doubt help to bring about a condition in which we may hope to contact Them, but we must besides do the best we know how and that we can to serve Their Cause, which is that of Humanity itself.

Masters are honest and just debtors and always repay, but "it

is not *what* is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done that is counted." Meanwhile, we must remember that it is for us to take the first step towards Them, in full confidence of Their response if the conditions are fulfilled. As Mr. Judge has written:—

> We *become* chelas; we obtain that position in reality because our inner nature is to that extent opened that it can and will take knowledge: we receive the guerdon at the hands of the Law. (*Letters That Have Helped Me,* p. 46)

Madame Blavatsky quotes the Eastern maxim which should spur every aspirant on to try: "When the pupil is ready, the teacher will be found waiting." (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism,* second ed., p. 40)

From an Unpublished Letter

You will find that it *is* possible for us to know a great many facts about the Masters, *i.e.,* about Their real nature, Their powers, etc. Most people from the days of H.P.B. up till even now have tried to understand Them by the aid of their ordinary thinking minds, and the best of them have failed in comprehending Them. At our stage They and Their Work have to be *apprehended.* It is a matter more of higher feeling than of philosophical thought. More of imagination should go into our ideation. Our study gives us the basis for our reflection. By this way Judge succeeded where Sinnett failed. So, don't try to reach out to Them with the mind, but, making study and service your basis, reach out to Them with your Heart. Strong search on the path of enquiry, gentle service of the souls of your fellows, humility in both study and service, will make Wisdom spring up spontaneously in you and you will *know* Them. Read the fourth chapter of the *Gita.* I tell you, Devotion does it; nothing else can. I agree with you: the starting point is within ourselves. So, find the starting point within yourself. In fact you have found that starting point in recognizing this very truth. The next steps are in every direction. How very accurately you have found the key to the march forward by taking up Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me!* You cannot find a better guide than those letters, written mostly to Jasper Niemand who succeeded in reaching Them by the heart.

ASTRONOMY AND THEOSOPHY

It is surely wrong to dismiss the discoveries of Western astronomy as technical advances irrelevant to true philosophy. They have produced a transformation in physical perspective which must pervade subtly the mental outlook of our times. Not many yesterdays ago our earth was seated comfortably in the centre of the cosmos of our imagination. Today it is less than a grain of sand on the seashore. Says astronomy: there are about 100,000 million stars or suns in our galaxy; within the field of view of our telescopes there are more than one million of such galaxies with an unknowable number beyond; the distance of the farthest galaxy from our own is such that its light, travelling at 186,000 miles per second, takes 10,000 million years to reach us; the diameter of our own galaxy is such that light takes 100,000 years to traverse it; our sun occupies a position rather near the outskirts of the galaxy and the whole of our system is rotating about its centre, which is obscured from our view by interstellar dust, once in a few hundred million years.

Anyone who troubles to contemplate these figures surely must either make the effort to harmonize human values with cosmic magnitudes or find himself oppressed with a sense of the insignificance and futility of human life.

The Wisdom-Religion has preserved the knowledge of the vastness of the universe; astronomy has popularized it. Without this popularization it is doubtful if the cosmogony of the Secret Doctrine would be either understandable by or acceptable to us, for each of us is the child of his time and unable to forge more than a little ahead of his fellows in mental outlook or moral sense, unless he be initiated. We cannot know, of course, what part the custodians of the Wisdom-Religion may have played in the rediscovery by astronomy that our earth is not the centre of our universe, but how much of that Wisdom can be revealed does depend very much upon the time. In reply to a suggestion that occult phenomena should be performed to convince the sceptics, a Master wrote:—

> The success of an attempt of such a kind as the one you propose, must be calculated and based upon a thorough knowledge of the people around you. It depends entirely upon the social and moral conditions of the people in their bearing on these deepest and most mysterious questions which can stir the human mind — the *deific* powers in man and the possibilities contained in nature. . . . We doubt not but the men of your science are open to conviction; yet facts must be first demonstrated to them, they must first have become their own property, have proved amenable to their own modes of investigation, before you find them ready to admit them as *facts*.

In the light of this quotation it is perhaps true to say that, in our capacity as potential assistants of the Masters in their work with

the race-mind, an intelligent grasp of the general outlook and methods of science and their divergence from those of occultism is useful. Those of occultism are outlined in the First Item of *The Secret Doctrine*: penetration into the kernel of matter through the physical, mental, psychic and spiritual powers latent in ordinary men but developed in great adepts, and the checking of the vision of one adept against those of others. Each adept gains a direct perception of inner realities, but each has the help of predecessors, however far back in time the story of occultism is followed. The methods of astronomy represent essentially the marriage of rational thought with careful observation and imaginative experiment in an attempt to find a rational order in the universe. (This applies, of course, to all the sciences.) They are not the processes of rational thought working in a vacuum, or simply the accumulation of data about the universe. They are the processes of rational thought working with the data provided by observation and experiment. The product leads to further observation and experiment, the results of which in their turn exercise further the processes of thought and may lead to a modification of the basic conceptions on which they had rested. This marriage can be understood best by following the history of science.

One of the greatest figures in the history of astronomy is that of Newton (1642-1727). Many people have heard of his name and of the story of the falling apple but few understand his decisive contribution to the scientific revolution or his profound influence on the habits of thought of every educated man (in the West at least). According to Dr. Bronowski and others, mediæval man regarded nature as essentially "animal, wilful and alive." Apples fell to the ground because it was the nature of apples to fall and so on. Newton had at his disposal accurate observations of the movements of the planets made by his predecessors. These were mere descriptions of the *behaviour* of the planets. Newton succeeded, where his predecessors had failed, in reducing these to a beautifully simple order. He formulated three simple mechanical laws and a fourth law of gravity, universal in application and mechanical in action, whereby, using his wonderful mathematical genius, he could *forecast* not only how the apple would fall but how the planets and the tides and the comets would move. The greatest triumph of his system occurred more than a hundred years ago, when the planet Uranus seemed not to be keeping time. It was taken for granted that some unseen planet was causing the deviations, and two men, Adams in England and Leverrier in France, independently calculated its position, using the methods and laws of Newton. When a telescope was turned to the position there was the hitherto unknown planet, Neptune. The contribution of Newton was not that he explained the fall of the apple but that he saw that the apple in its fall and the planet in its orbit, in fact everything in motion, followed apparently the same laws. Each was not a law unto itself.

Without the genius of Newton, the then known facts of astronomy could not have revealed the order which he showed; without the facts gathered by those who went before, the genius of Newton could not have acted in the way it did. The two together overthrew the basic assumptions of mediæval thought and imposed a new system and a new outlook on the Western world. To the work of Newton the student of Theosophy must trace his ability to understand the idea of universal and impersonal laws, but also his difficulty in understanding the intelligent nature of those laws and the work of the hierarchies, because of the mechanical nature of his system.

The practical success following the applications of Newton's system during the succeeding centuries led to its unquestioning acceptance. One of the first doubts arose when the planet Mercury was observed not to be keeping to schedule. But this time no Neptune could be discovered. It was left to the genius of Einstein to trace the errors in the calculation of the time of Mercury to the non-validity of the basic assumptions of Newton's system — those of absolute time and absolute space. Newton had assumed the possibility of a universal "now" for all observers. This cannot be. Any observer must mark his "now" for another observer by sending him a signal, visual or auditory, but before the signal reaches him that "now" has passed and cannot be known by the second observer. Similar considerations apply to location in space. In coping with the intervals and distances of everyday life these considerations are of no practical significance, but in dealing with cosmic magnitudes they are of importance, and in particular Einstein's inquiries led to the realization of the equivalence of mass and energy and to the atomic bomb. Philosophically, the inquiries have proved of the utmost importance. First, they have led to the acceptance of space and time as being inextricably interwoven as aspects of a single reality. Secondly, they have taken the mind of man from the position of mere looker-on, as in the Newtonian system, into intimate relationship with the world he observes. Thirdly, they have led astronomy to accept a limitation to the observable.

Space does not permit detailed explanation of Einstein's work, but the following might be added: Under the influence of the great successes following the applications of Newton's system, scientists had come to assume that everything in theory was knowable by their methods. There might be serious practical difficulties in the way. It would be impracticable to count the grains of sand on the seashore but in theory it could be done. Now it is admitted that in the very nature of things there are parts of the cosmos not to be explored by our telescopes. A parallel development has taken place in atomic physics for there are things about the atom we can never know. This is a fundamental change in outlook which should be noted by us. It marks a step nearer to occultism even though a great gap still yawns between it and science. Thus a basic pattern was repeated in the work of Einstein — interaction between experiment and observation and the

processes of rational thought producing both practical results and a modification of outlook.

Now let us glance at the methods of observation used by astronomers. The most important instruments are the telescope and the spectroscope. The former enables accurate measurements of direction to be made and collects and focuses the light from the heavenly bodies; the latter analyzes this light into its various components of different colours. In recent years a new instrument, the radio telescope, has been developed, but this is a different form of the optical telescope to handle invisible long-wave radiation from the stars and nebulæ.

The light waves are our messengers, and our only messengers, conveying information to us from the distant outposts of space. The messages are in a code; when deciphered they seem to tell us of the existence of the same elements in the stars as we find in our earth, and of a basic similarity of physical structure underlying a wide variation in physical conditions. Note what Madame Blavatsky has to say:—

> In all your scientific calculations and measurements it is necessary to consider that the light by which the objects are seen is a *reflected* light, and the optical illusion caused by the atmosphere of the earth renders it impossible that calculation of distances, etc., should be absolutely correct, in addition to the fact that it entirely alters observations of the matter of which the celestial bodies are composed, as it is liable to impose upon us a constitution similar to that of the earth. (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 114)
>
> The spectroscope only shows the probable similarity (on external evidence) of terrestrial and sidereal substance; it is unable to go any farther, or to show whether atoms gravitate towards one another in the same way and under the same conditions as they are supposed to do on our planet, physically and chemically. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 142)
>
> The Law of Analogy in the plan of structure between the trans-Solar systems and the intra-Solar planets, does not necessarily bear upon the finite conditions to which every visible body is subject, in this our plane of being. In Occult Science this law is the first and most important key to Cosmic physics; but it has to be studied in its minutest details and, "to be turned seven times," before one comes to understand it. (*S.D.*, I. 150-51)

It must be added that it is well understood that our atmosphere alters the light messages coming to us from the stars and allowance is made for this in our calculations, but from the above it would seem that the alteration is more profound than is realized.

Finally, let us review the theories of the origin of the universe. They fall broadly into two groups: the evolutionary and the steady state theories. In the former the universe is considered to have been created at some point in time and to have evolved to its present condition. In some forms of this theory, it has been produced by the expansion of what is called the primeval atom which was created

by some divine act out of space and time. In the steady state theories the universe has always existed and always will exist in its present condition. Now there is strong evidence provided by the analysis of light from the stars by the spectroscope, that the universe is expanding rapidly, taking the present stars farther and farther away from one another. (There is an apparent drop in the rate of vibration of the light analogous to the apparent fall in pitch of the whistle of a railway engine which is moving away from the observer.) This expansion is to be expected in the evolutionary theories, but the steady state theories find it necessary to assume the continuous creation of matter in space, ultimately producing new stars to replace those which move outwards beyond our ken, so that to an observer on any planet or star the appearance of the universe around him will remain unaltered throughout the millennia.

Madame Blavatsky uses the term primordial atom, but it marks a more metaphysical conception than that of astronomy of a gigantic atom in which all the matter of the universe was once concentrated. She wrote:—

> The *Primordial Atom* (*anu*) cannot be multiplied either in its pregenetic state, or its primogeneity; therefore it is called "SUM TOTAL," figuratively, of course, as that "SUM TOTAL" is boundless.... That which is the abyss of nothingness to the physicist, who knows only the world of visible causes and effects, is the boundless Space of the Divine *Plenum* to the Occultist. (*S.D.*, I. 148)

Madame Blavatsky goes on to describe the alternate appearance and disappearance of the universe, a conception which is absent from either theory, although the evolutionary theories do include the mathematical possibility of the alternate expansion and contraction of the universe from and to the primeval atom.

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* Madame Blavatsky uses the symbol of the Mundane Egg.

> We have the plane of the circle, the face being black, the point in the circle being potentially white, and this is the first possible conception in our minds of the invisible Logos. "Ever-Darkness" is eternal, the Ray periodical. Having flashed out from this central point and thrilled through the Germ, the Ray is withdrawn again within this point and the Germ develops into the Second Logos, the triangle within the Mundane Egg.... The Mundane Egg is simply the first stage of manifestation, undifferentiated primordial matter, in which the vital creative Germ receives its first spiritual impulse; Potentiality becomes Potency.... Thus the Egg, on whatever plane you speak of, means the ever-existing undifferentiated matter which strictly is not matter at all but, as we call it, the Atoms.

Is the theory of the primordial atom created by an act out of space and time and then expanding to evolve the cosmos reminiscent of the

above symbology?

In this brief article we have tried to indicate some of the lines of the evolution of ideas in astronomy because we believe that an understanding of these is useful to us. If our hope is to widen the field of scientific and philosophical observation, as Madame Blavatsky writes in *The Key to Theosophy*, then first we need a sound working knowledge of the Philosophy, but also some understanding of how, when and in what form it can supply the needs of the time.

Number 20 (1959) of *Comprendre*, the eminent political review in French and English, published at Venice, devotes more than one-third of its 400-odd pages to "India in the Dialogue of Civilizations." Well-known writers of several countries contribute to the discussion.

In his striking article on "India's Dialogue With Herself," Professor Arnold Toynbee expresses the opinion that a people's attitude towards Reality, in the metaphysical and religious sense, governs that people's attitude towards itself and its neighbours — an opinion that seems no less valid for the individual than for a people.

Professor Toynbee contrasts favourably the comprehensive Indian attitude to truth with the unique and exclusive claims not only of Western religions but also of certain Western ideologies with no pretensions to divine inspiration. Since Hinduism is held by its votaries to contain all the elements of religion, a properly enlightened Hindu, he says, can see other religions as interesting variations of these themes, and can treasure them as complementary to his particular practice. In the West, on the contrary, each religious group deplores the other's sectarianism while tolerating it because it has been learnt, by disillusioning experience, that "coexistence is a lesser evil than wars that could not extirpate the rival sect but could, and did, beget hatred and atrocities."

Professor Toynbee is convinced that, if the West and the world are to save themselves from self-destruction, they must find some spiritual antidote to the traditional (and prevalent) Western temper. The traditional Indian temper, he considers, offers "just the right thing at the right time." "Here India has a living spiritual treasure of the utmost worth to give to the world."

He recognizes that India, in her "dialogue with herself," faces possibilities of serious conflicts between the traditional and the new, but he takes consolation in believing that, if his Western eyes could see the situation as Indian eyes see it, it would look neither so tragic nor so perilous as it looks to him. "It is hardly possible," he writes, "for a post-Neoplatonic Westerner to make sufficient allowance for the abiding catholicity of the Indian attitude or for the positiveness of its spirit of tolerance."

STUDIES IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

SECOND SERIES

III. — METAPHYSICS OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE

[Reprinted from *Theosophy,* Vol. XII, pp. 110-114, for January 1924.—EDS.]

The Stanzas of Dzyan, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, belong to the same series as the fragments published under the title, *The Voice of the Silence.* This information conveyed in the preface to the latter should be made a subject for meditation, for it is a practical hint with an occult significance which students of *The Secret Doctrine* ought not to miss.

Wisdom and Compassion are inherent in Law and manifested in Nature. They are not two distinct qualities but two phases of one quality. In man the head and the heart are regarded as two different organisms. All our struggles and sufferings arise from this fundamental misconception. Once recognized that head and heart are but two aspects of one nature, there opens for us the way of the inner life. What follows is the removal of the obstacles which have covered over and obscured the narrow bridge between head and heart; then the establishment of communication; and finally the coadunition of both.

These two aspects of Wisdom and Compassion are the soul of the *Stanzas of Dzyan* and *The Voice of the Silence.* The treatises conjointly used will help to remove the barrier, to bridge the two worlds — to make our reason compassionate and our love intelligent. The *Bhagavad-Gita* performs this double task within its eighteen discourses, as does the *Dhammapada* and the very first sermon Gautama, the Buddha, delivered on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.

In the present cycle our minds are separated from compassion, and our ethical impulses prompted more by our psychic than by our spiritual nature. The study of H.P.B.'s writings uncovers the foundation-principles, intellectual and philosophic, for our ethical beliefs and views; shows us where and how we are mistaken and by what method correction can take place; endows with a living and vital soul our mental perceptions and speculations and indicates how our general knowledge can be practically applied for self-improvement and the service of others.

Purification of the mind, the removal from it of psychic impressions and Kamic influences, is the first task; only then can follow its illumination by Buddhi, the ray of Atma. Towards this first task the understanding of the physical universe metaphysically — in other words the perceiving of the causes of effects, the seeing of the relation between Reality and Illusion — becomes necessary. Herein lies the reason of the reiterated insistence in *The Secret Doctrine* not to separate man from deity, or divide

matter into animate and inanimate, or make a distinction between natural and supernatural. Man is divine; matter is living; all nature is one. Having established this proposition, *The Secret Doctrine* Proceeds to show the true compartmenting of the phases and aspects of the One Life, *viz.*, Microcosm and Macrocosm, Spirit and Matter, normal and abnormal. The world of the within and that of the without; the reflecting of the above in the below; the shadowing of spirit-substance as material forms — these are explained, not as a speculative theory of cold philosophy, but as the doctrine of the practical science of life.

By fecundating that spiritual faculty of intuition referred to in the last study, we are shown how man and nature are governed by the same Law — they are but parts of the one whole. That clear vision or understanding, that power of knowledge, *Jnana-shakti,* is acquired through a comprehension of the universals of which all particulars are but expressions. Man cannot know himself save through his own shadows cast on the Nature around him; conversely, by the apperception of reflections which Nature projects in and on him. What else is ignorance but the result of dividing an indivisible whole? A metaphysical vision of the unity of all Nature from star dust to sea sand, from atom to universe, from the erratic movement of a comet to the rhythmic beat of the human heart, leads us to the practice of brotherhood without distinction of sex, caste, creed, colour or race. Without that metaphysical vision the Law of Brotherhood cannot be fully or truly grasped, and cannot be completely or correctly applied in life. All parties, all sects, all nations preach brotherhood — they are unable to live it or promulgate it for the simple reason that the metaphysical soul of brotherhood has not been taken note of; nay, has not been noticed at all.

When we have been able to see the basis of the One Life Principle, we will be ready to see the duality of Self and not-self, of the "I" and the universe other than the "I," of God and Satan in us, of the light and the dark sides of Nature, of the manifestation of the Law of Cycles or Periodicity. Once this duality is taken note of, we are fitted to tread the ancient road of Immortality — the realization of the Self, the growing of the universe into the "I," the inversion of Satan into God, the mergence of the dark into the never-fading glory of Light Eternal, of cycles and periods becoming Timeless Bliss. In these three processes lie all the practices of *The Secret Doctrine* — they are the beginning and end of all knowledge. Thus are to be recognized the three fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine.*

The workings of the Law of Cycles are to be observed in the rest of deep sleep and in the restlessness of waking conscious existence; in the growth of spring, the fruition of summer, in the shedding of autumnal leaves and in the dreary winter months of the years of our incarnation; through birthdays and anniversaries; and in numerous other ways. Manifestation and non-manifestation, paths of forthgoing

and return are to be seen within ourselves; between two beats of the human heart is the same silence of *pralaya* — reflection of the Sublime Silence of *Mahapralaya*. Between those two heartbeats, which are throbs of life, we experience the silence of separation, of death. Thus the ebb and flow of motion and rest are but our experiences; and to harmonize them in one rhythmic whole of activity without motion, of activity which is rest, is to realize the Bliss of Nirvana.

First, then, to see ourselves as a part of Nature in whom Light and Darkness, Bliss and Misery, Knowledge and Nescience inhere; secondly, to see that all pairs of opposites are but manifestations of the Law of Cycles; thirdly, that there is an underlying substratum of unity in which all pairs of opposites are dissolved, and Bliss — timeless and spaceless and motionless — alone *is*.

The self-evident nature of the first item is our starting point. Which of the two directions shall we follow — the Path of Light, Bliss and Knowledge or that of Darkness, Misery and Nescience? Here are the origins of materialism and spirituality, of black and white magic, of mediumship and adeptship, leading to Avitchi — annihilation — and Nirvana — emancipation.

Sometimes people have asked why *The Secret Doctrine* establishes the three fundamental propositions in abstruse terms of metaphysics and high philosophy. Why not give, it is suggested, the basic principles in simple and easily understandable language of religious morality? If all things in this objective universe, and the latter itself, rest in and on these fundamentals, why define and describe them in brain-wrecking terminology and mind-perplexing phraseology? Give us three simple words; if not words, then phrases; if not phrases, then sentences; at least limit them to three short paragraphs — let the preliminaries be gone through and done with!

Morality and ethics separated from philosophy and metaphysics would land us into that dire heresy of separateness referred to above — to divide wisdom from compassion, head from heart, the *Stanzas of Dzyan* from *The Voice of the Silence*. The tendency to dissociate metaphysics from science, morality, art, etc., is natural to our civilization. During the last several centuries metaphysical philosophy has been a very useless kind of speculative hair-splitting all over Europe. The Western world has first to be trained in the idea that the philosophy of the Ancients is far from speculative and that Eastern metaphysics is a science that is highly practical. The writings of H.P.B. go to make this amply clear. In our own Theosophical Movement we have suffered through the obtuseness of many early students who failed to see the reasons for viewing, studying and examining the teachings of the Masters through H.P.B. in their true setting and perspective, *viz.*, metaphysical and philosophical.

In the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. has gone to the trouble of pointing this out. Correcting errors in early books, she embraces the opportunity of putting us on our guard against a similar

blunder. Facts and teachings of Cosmogenesis and Anthropogenesis, if they are to be fully understood, "must be examined far more from their metaphysical aspect than from what one might call a statistical standpoint, involving figures and numbers which are rarely permitted to be broadly used. Unfortunately, there are few who are inclined to handle these doctrines only metaphysically" (Vol. I, p. 169). We must guard against the tendency of neglecting metaphysics. About such a tendency the Master once said: "Why this preaching of our doctrines, all this uphill work and swimming *in adversum flumen?* Why should the West . . . learn . . . from the East . . . that which can never meet the requirements of the special tastes of the æsthetics?" And he draws his correspondent's attention "to the formidable difficulties encountered by us [the Adepts] in every attempt we make to explain our metaphysics to the Western mind." (*Ibid.*)

The student of *The Secret Doctrine* has to learn at the very start that "*outside* of metaphysics no occult philosophy, no esotericism is possible. It is like trying to explain the aspirations and affections, the love and hatred, the most private and sacred workings in the soul and mind of the living man, by an anatomical description of the chest and brain of his dead body." The desire to become practical occultists, if pure and genuinely unselfish, will bring the realization that practical occultism is but the lowest form of applied metaphysics.

Psychic and spiritual teachings are not more fully understood because their metaphysical basis is not contemplated upon. Is it to be wondered at, then, that the fundamentals of the esoteric science are metaphysical in character, and that the books of H.P.B. abound in lengthy and many-sided considerations of metaphysical propositions? *The Secret Doctrine* is full of metaphysical universals and particulars, of philosophical principles and details for the same reason that the Vedas and the Upanishads, the six points of view of the six Indian Schools are also full of them. The Gnostics and the Neo-Platonists, the Pythagoreans and Essenes before them also taught metaphysically. Every attempt to dissociate metaphysics from science, philosophy from psychology, has resulted in the degradation of the omnipresent omniscience into a personal god, of man's divinity into carnal bestiality, of the Wisdom-Religion into a religious creed.

To guard us against falling prey to that old tendency inherent in humanity, the Masters of H.P.B. sent us a noble warning. In the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. publishes verbatim the following letter to which we should always turn when meditation on the three fundamental propositions looks to us barren and dry and unpractical. We reproduce it here (*S.D.*, I. 167):—

> Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally. Whenever you are able to attune your consciousness to any of the seven chords of "Universal Consciousness," those chords that run along the sounding-board

of Kosmos, vibrating from one Eternity to another; when you have studied thoroughly "the music of the Spheres," then only will you become quite free to share your knowledge with those with whom it is safe to do so. Meanwhile, be prudent. Do not give out the great Truths that are the inheritance of the future Races, to our present generation. Do not attempt to unveil the secret of being and non-being to those unable to see the hidden meaning of Apollo's HEPTACHORD — the lyre of the radiant god, in each of the seven strings of which dwelleth the Spirit, Soul and Astral Body of the Kosmos, whose shell only has now fallen into the hands of Modern Science.... Be prudent, we say, prudent and wise, and above all take care what those who learn from you believe in; lest by deceiving themselves they deceive others... for such is the fate of every truth with which men are, as yet, unfamiliar.... Let rather the planetary chains and other super- and sub-cosmic mysteries remain a dreamland for those who can neither see, nor yet believe that others can....

—B. P. WADIA

YOGA

I have lain on grey rocks
so warm and so dry,
Feeling their wonderful strength
until I
Became the earth and the earth
was I.

I have stood on a hilltop
and looked in the sky,
Gazed through the infinite blue
until I
Became the blue and the blue
was I.

I have lain on the water
as brown sea-weeds lie,
Rocked by the fathomless swell
until I
Became the sea and the sea
was I.

I have sat on gold sands watching
red sunsets die,
Brooding on suns and their planets
till I
Embraced the sun and the sun
was I.

I have looked long and deep
in my brother man's eye,
Loving the real of his soul
until I
Became his life and his life
was I.

I have searched at the centre,
so near and so high,
Of my own mysterious life
until I
Knew that Self, and life, and spirit,
was I.

SELF-CONTROL VERSUS SELF-INDULGENCE

> Deeds of sacrifice, of mortification, and of charity are not to be abandoned, for they are proper to be performed, and are the purifiers of the wise.
>
> —*The Bhagavad-Gita*

Prominent among deeds of mortification or *tapas* is control of the bodily lusts and appetites. Lust has a wider field than sexual desire, and one who is slave to his palate, to his body's hurt, should bear in mind the warning in *The Voice of the Silence*:—

> Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara. It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart.

Each yielding makes the final conquest harder. In an "Editor's Note" in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, p. 88, Madame Blavatsky tells us that "if there is one thing more than another which paralyzes the will-power in man and thereby paves the way to physical and moral degradation it is intemperance in eating."

There is food for thought also in the Master's statement that "one who becomes a slave to any physical weakness never becomes the master of even the lower powers of nature."

Sometimes our nearest and dearest are unconsciously in league with the enemy, desiring as they do to give us pleasure and little realizing the price of self-indulgence to ourselves in lost self-confidence and weakened will. But the responsibility of overcoming temptation or the guilt of weakly yielding to it is our own. A verse of a Christian hymn with little claim to poetry conveys sound advice:—

> Yield not to temptation,
> For yielding is sin.
> Each victory will help you
> Some other to win.

What is indulgence of the sense of taste against one's better judgment but a low-plane gratification which yields the sceptre to the body which ought to be the real man's obedient servant? We are told in *Through the Gates of Gold*:—

> . . . let the king resolve to change the face of his court and forcibly evict the animal from the chair of state, restoring the god to the place of divinity.
>
> Ah, the profound peace that falls upon the palace! . . . No longer is there the fever of personal longings or desires, no longer is there any rebellion or distress, no longer any hunger for pleasure or dread of pain.

The subjugation of the lower to the higher nature sometimes takes much longer than it need or should. A clean break with a bad habit or one injurious to the body is quicker, surer and, in the long run, far less painful, though requiring moral stamina. It is the only way, apparently, for a compulsive drinker to break the chains of alcohol addiction. And, in the case of any earnest student of Theosophy who knows that even a small quantity of a particular food is poisonous to his body, giving it up ought surely to be a matter of one deliberate and irrevocable decision. The greater the effort the more glorious the victory! The opposite course is no more sensible than it would be, in the name of sparing suffering, to make a necessary amputation inch by inch instead of once for all.

Very different from the moral weakness of one who submits to the rule of his palate is the case described by H.P.B. in the "Editor's Notes" reprinted in our May 1954 issue from *The Theosophist* for November 1882, of one who *offers* his life in sacrifice to philanthropy and to his duty. He will have to live in *kama loka* his appointed life term, even "the man of science who wastes his life in brain-work and fatigue and *knows* he is so wasting it and yet is offering it day after day and night after night in order to discover some great law of the universe, the discovery of which may bring in its results some great boon to mankind." But he dies honoured and admired by all.

On the other hand, we find in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 113, gluttons named as one of the classes, including executed individuals, drunkards and black magicians living in the astral world, who "hold the field of physical mediumship and are liable to invade the sphere of any medium. . . ."

One whose family responsibilities demand that he preserve as fully and as long as possible his life in health and strength, and especially one whose contact with Theosophy has aroused in him enthusiasm and a keen sense of obligation to serve his fellow men by helping spread its teachings, what excuse can he offer to the Masters or to the Higher Self for shortening by self-indulgence the life of his physical body? "My palate tempted me and I did eat"?

There is no need for dejection if we have tried and failed, though there is a great need of strengthening our resolution. *The Voice of the Silence* bids us "lose not courage: fight on, and to the charge return again and yet again," looking for strength to overcome our weakness to our Higher Self, the Divine Spirit, or the God in us, and to our Karma.

> . . . whoso overcomes in this world the fierce craving difficult to subdue finds his sorrows fall off like water-drops from a lotus leaf.

WHAT IS DEATH?

At whatever period of history we look, we find that man has never been without a friend. Even at the darkest moments of the world's history, or of our own individual lives, help and comfort can always be derived if we know where to look for them.

Of real help and comfort to us is the understanding of the meaning of a circumstance and the way it should be faced. There are few philosophers as helpful in this respect for the ordinary man as Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor of the second century, and Epictetus, the slave philosopher. They are far better teachers on how to live than many of the present writers and psychiatrists.

If indeed we are a superior genus of animal, and to die is to cease to be, then let us "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." If we are immortal, divine beings in animal-human forms, having a goal of perfection which must be reached by our own efforts, then we can joyfully shoulder the burdens of life. Life invests itself with a purpose, not a purpose limited to "three-score years and ten," but a purpose which lasts from life to life. There is no death, *i.e.*, cessation, but immortal *living*.

What is death? Materialistic science says that when we die we are no more; the substance of our bodies goes back to Nature. Religions speak of Heaven and Hell and offer Eternal Bliss or Eternal Hell. Occult Philosophy and the Great Teachers of all ages have given a different teaching, infinitely more reasonable and constructive.

Scientifically, that which exists can never cease to exist; that which does not exist can never exist. Unfoldment takes place and forms change, but Life itself goes on. If our consciousness leaves the body at death, does it cease to be? It leaves the body during sleep, but re-enters when we wake. What happens to it at death when it does not re-enter the body? Are the Spiritualists right when they say that the consciousness lives on in a finer body? The ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead* describes the after-death states very graphically, though allegorically. Shall we believe in it? Do we accept what Jesus said to the thief on the cross: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise"?

Let us go a little deeper and study more fully the ancient teaching on the after-death states.

When a man dies the immortal part of him leaves the body. As that body has a magnetic counterpart called the astral body, it dwells in that. Immediately he is pronounced dead he sees in a review his whole past life, down to the smallest detail, and he sees it in a way he had not seen it during life, for the Divine Parent itself descends at the moment of death and floods the personal consciousness with light so that the whole field of the life just lived is illuminated and the meaning of the experiences gone through shown.

But when this is done consciousness withdraws entirely and falls into a sleep which may last for a few hours, a few days, weeks, months

or years, depending on the grossness of the last life or its "goodness." During this sleep, either dreamless or nightmarish, another death or separation takes place. All the memories that pertain to the higher side of life stay with the consciousness, while all the gross, selfish desires, feelings and thoughts form an entity which remains in that astral form. The consciousness of this entity is not what we would call consciousness, but unconsciousness, and it drifts like a leaf in the wind while it undergoes the process of disintegration. This second corpse may last for a short while or for a very long while, and if it is left alone the normal process of decomposition will take place. But, if it be contacted by a medium or attracted to a séance, the memories can be reawakened, as the record on a gramophone can be brought to life by the gramophone needle, the medium representing, in this analogy, the needle. This reawakening of the memories of the past life is good neither for the medium nor for the corpse, for its decomposition is hindered. Therefore necromancy has always been strongly denounced by all sages.

The consciousness, however, has left the second corpse and, clothed in its highest and purest memories, has risen to what is called the heaven world or *Devachan,* the place of the Gods. Here it re-lives the past life, but surrounded only by the memories of the aspirations cherished, the good and loving deeds performed during life, and hence it is in a state of complete bliss. The consciousness, the real man, does not know he is alone, but is surrounded by the images of all his loved ones and is in a state of beatitude, out of touch with the earth and therefore not knowing at all what is happening here. As love and thoughts are not mere ephemera but forces, they affect the living, and at night, when the living sleep, their consciousness may touch the consciousness of the departed.

But the ancient teaching is adamant on the point that the living cannot communicate with the dead as the latter are in a state of subjective consciousness and cannot be awakened to any objective awareness till the next rebirth. Does this sound heartless? Why should it? We leave one another in sleep every night; death is only a longer sleep. The living get the benefit of the love poured out by the departed friends, and can be refreshed by ascent to their high plane during sleep. What does it matter whether we can or cannot carry on conversations with those who have passed on to the higher spheres? Is it not our selfishness that seems to demand it? There is much more comfort in the thought that no one can wake them till they themselves awake after they have assimilated the experiences of the past life. The period required for this process is given on an average as 1,500 years, though it may be much shorter or much longer, depending on that which has to be assimilated.

The question is sometimes asked: Do consciousnesses on that high plane communicate with one another? The ancient teaching again is adamant: they do not. Magnetically separated from all other entities on that plane, they are left undisturbed until their dream condition is over

As this dream condition is of each man's own making, those who have believed in the Christian heaven will find themselves in their thought in the typical heaven of pearly gates and harps of gold; the Mohammedan will find himself in the kind of heaven his religion has taught him to expect; the consciousness of those who have been materialists, who have not aspired towards the spiritual world, will be a blank. Man is truly thought-formed. He builds his own environment, both on earth and in the after-death conditions.

Suicides and those cut off from life prematurely by accidents or execution do not go through this full process until the time comes when they would have died a natural death. All that a suicide or the executioner can do is to cut off the physical body; the process of second death, above described, has not taken place, so that the man is alive minus the physical body. If he has led a good and pure life, he sleeps; if his character during life was evil or coarse, he thinks and feels accordingly but has no physical form to act through. This is a very dreadful state to be in, for without a body cravings cannot be satisfied, and such entities deprived of bodies haunt the sites of crime, drinking dens and so on, and gain some degree of satisfaction. Or they "obsess" living men, often causing them to perform actions of which they are not fully aware. This is one reason why crimes are often in greater evidence after wars. Motive is the important factor and the state of one who sacrifices his life for others will differ greatly from that of one who kills himself to avoid punishment for wrong-doing.

The last words of the Buddha should be borne in mind: "Impermanent are all conditioned beings." Quiet acquiescence in what happens at its proper time affords no occasion for grief.

We have had many bodies and have died many times, so why should we fear death now? Indeed natural death is a gateway to a life of bliss, unalloyed bliss, without worry or care of any kind. We do not know we are dead; there is no loneliness, no fear, for we live entirely in our thoughts and surrounded by the memories of loved ones and of the happy times we have known, as lost in that happy dream as we have been on earth when lost in a daydream.

But all things come to an end, and so does this dream. Life again wakes us, and once more the ray of the Spirit goes out to inhabit a body and to gain further experience. We meet again those we have loved (or hated) and work with them. We have our hard corners rubbed off and our good points of character strengthened, and even though "sorrow is," yet life is good. Rebirths take place compulsorily until all has been learnt and then rebirth becomes voluntary.

Does this teaching throw any light on the problem of birth control, or that of population? It does: if souls are waiting to incarnate, what are we doing when we try to stop them? Nature works according to the law of perfect economy: when we thwart it we reap consequences of which we had not dreamt!

KARMA AND REINCARNATION

[We are indebted for the following to *Theosophy,* Vol. XXXIV, pp. 427-430, for September 1946. It is an abstract of W. Q. Judge's talk at the T. S. Convention of April 1890, given extemporaneously, and published in the *Proceedings* of the Theosophical Society in America. The simplicity and directness of his talk illustrates well his expressed conviction that "the A B C of Theosophy should be taught all the time."—EDS.]

The doctrine of Karma cannot be considered properly without keeping Reincarnation in view, for Karma could not have its proper place and operation unless reincarnations furnished the material for it to show itself in. Reincarnation is, indeed, itself a part of, and is as well a cause of Karma, because the reincarnated man, struggling with fate, ignorance, and desires, generates constantly new causes that may result in further reincarnations.

The meaning of the word Karma must be inquired into. It really means *action.* It is the action of the Divine, or God, or the Unmanifested, or Brahma, and also of every sentient being. All worlds are subject to it, as is declared in the *Bhagavad-Gita,* where it says: "All worlds up to that of Brahma are subject to Karma." Hence it is found operating in all planes. It is Karma that brought us here, that will take us to Devachan, and afterwards bring us out of that condition. For if Karma does not act superiorly to Devachan, then we could never emerge from the latter; but the moment "the reward is exhausted in the heavens of Indra" — which is a description of Devachan — Karma seizes upon the ego and draws it into another body, there to begin again the adjustment of the scales.

The Buddhists did not lose time in wandering about, lost in illogical doctrines of salvation and favour from a jealous god, but considered the problem presented by the vicissitudes of life, in the extraordinary fact that the just man often receives no reward and the wicked one no punishment. Finding an explanation needed, they hit upon the word Karma, or Kamma as they call it in Ceylon. This is briefly stated by Rev. P. T. Terunnanse, F.T.S. of Ceylon. "Kamma when viewed thus is good or bad deeds of sentient beings, by the infallible influence or efficiency of which the said beings are met with due rewards or punishments, according as they deserve, in any state of life. And we must remember that the world has no being, in the essential sense, but is subject to an alternating process of destruction and renovation."

This leads us to consider the erroneous views of some as to what Karma is. Some think it an evil influence that stands ready to strike a man at the first favourable moment, and I have met more of those who looked at it thus than as being also the good results and compensations of life. It cannot be properly called "the law of ethical causation" only, for if it applies "to all worlds up to Brahma," it must be more than this.

It is the great law which operates also through a manvantara, and which — considering a manvantara as a great Being made up of all beings included therein — causes each manvantara to be the exact resultant of the one which preceded it.

Nor should we make the error of applying it only to ourselves as a great whole, for it affects every atom in our bodies. As we are in fact made up of a *mass of lives,* our thoughts and acts affect these atoms or lives and impress them with a Karma of their own. This again rebounds on us as well as on all other atoms or lives.

Karma is a great benefactor, for it never fails to mete out all compensation, demanding that the smallest good act or thought should bring what we call reward. Now as we have been reincarnated over and over again, we have met each other in previous lives. The laws of affinity and harmony require that those who are now together must have been with each other before. So the acts of charity and kindness we perform now will compel similar acts to be done for us in other lives, and [Karma] is bringing about such in this life because we did those of like nature in another life. As *The Voice of the Silence* says, "Help them today and they will help you tomorrow." So I believe that I am working now to help you and you me, because there still exists a reciprocal obligation. . . .

The causes of reincarnation are desire and ignorance. We have what we term "will," but our will is moved into action by desire, and our acts spring from the desire to bring about pleasure or to avoid pain. As long as we are ignorant we constantly fix our desires upon enjoyment or the avoidance of pain, and thus lay the ground for the operation of Karma in another body. . . .

In each life all previous Karma is not exhausted, because the desires and old meditations are not able to manifest themselves unless the apparatus or sort of body is provided which will permit the bringing up to the surface of the old impressions. This is clearly set forth in Patanjali's *Yoga Philosophy*. Thus by means of inheritance of bodily frames of various sorts, the ego may exhaust by degrees its Karma, and this explains the difference in men. The man who has a great wide brain takes hold of old Karma which that apparatus may exhaust.

And at this point ignorance shows its power: As, ignorant of the law, we sin against it, we receive the result; or, acting in accord with it, another result; in the one case sorrow, in the other, happiness. So we must beware, having become acquainted with the law, that we do not continue as trespassers, for in the present life we settle the opportunities for the next and determine whether we shall in that succeeding reincarnation have opportunity to live with good men, helped by them, or among the vile, ever pushed toward evil. . . .

Of the more recondite mysteries of Reincarnation I will not speak, since those are more or less speculative, but will divide it thus:

(*a*) Reincarnation in good surroundings and in a good body, and

(*b*) Reincarnation in the opposite sort of body and in an evil family

Karma as affecting us we may for the present analyze thus:

(*a*) That sort which is now operating in our present life and body;
(*b*) That which is held over and will operate in other lives or in a later period of this one;
(*c*) That which we are making for other lives to come.

The fields in which Karma may operate are:

(*a*) In the body only, or the mere circumstances of life;
(*b*) In the mental plane when trials of the mind are felt;
(*c*) In the psychical nature.

The spiritual plane is not affected by Karma at any time....

Karmic causes may interfere with each other and produce a result in our life which, while similar to neither cause, will be the proper resultant of both. It may also be exhausted by two opposite Karmic causes meeting each other and thus destroying the effect of each.

Its effect is also varied to our sight by the apparatus or body and mind through which it works, in this, that instead of such and such a Karmic cause producing an instantaneous result, it may be spread out over many years in a series of misfortunes, the sum total of which might in some other person appear in one single disaster or favourable turn of fortune.

Jesus of the Christians uses the words of occultism and describes Karma in this language:—

> Judge not that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge so shall ye be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again; and as ye sow so shall ye reap.

This is a restatement of the great law as declared by the Brahmin who taught Gautama Buddha, and by Buddha himself. Those great sages said that none other than ourselves forged the chains that bind us, and no other hand but our own smites us.

The road up which we must climb to rise above Karma and thus be able to help our fellow men with conscious power well directed, is that one which is marked with the signs of Charity and Love.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Stranger, though new the frame
Thy soul inhabits now, I've traced its flame
For many an age, in every chance and change
Of that Existence, through whose varied range—
As through a torch-race, where, from hand to hand
The flying youths transmit their shining brand—
From frame to frame the unextinguished soul
Rapidly passes, till it reach the goal!

—THOMAS MOORE: *Lalla Rookh*

FOR OLD SOULS IN YOUNG BODIES

"FUN"—AND HAPPINESS

"I had been going to ask you to help me, dear, this afternoon, but I guess I can manage without you. Go on your picnic and have a good time!"

"Oh, I'm so glad you'll let me go, Mother! It will be such fun!"

Thirteen-year-old Sharada ran gaily to the next compound to tell her young cousins that she could go with them on their picnic, which they greeted with pleasure as great as her own.

As she opened the gate to go home for a wrap, she met Lakshmi, whom they all liked, coming in. She also had been invited for the outing, but was coming to say she could not go. Sharada turned back to join in the protest which she knew would be made.

"Won't your mother let you come?" demanded Mohana, adding without waiting for the answer, "I think it's too bad! Ask her again and tell her we all want you!"

"No, no," Lakshmi hastened to explain. "Mother would have let me go, I know, but I didn't ask her because when I came in I saw she was too busy. She was getting ready to make pickles this afternoon, thinking I'd be home because it's Saturday; and I knew she would need me to look after the twins and perhaps to help her too. I'd have liked to go, very much, any other day."

"I'll go and ask her," impulsive Sharada exclaimed and she had almost reached the gate when Lakshmi overtook her. "Young people need fun!" Sharada protested; but Lakshmi succeeded in persuading her to turn back.

Sharada went back to the others reluctantly and Lakshmi, with a smile and a gay wave of her hand to Sharada and the others, ran down the street towards home.

It was a busy afternoon for Lakshmi but one full of quiet happiness. She helped prepare the ingredients for pickling, enlisting the eager if rather awkward assistance of her small sisters, who felt important to be helping; relieved her mother at stirring the pot and adding fuel to the fire; and between-whiles played out-of-doors with the youngsters. The time flew and she could scarcely believe that it was nearly time for the sun to set when the picnickers came past, looking tired and, truth to tell, a little out of sorts, responding rather listlessly to Lakshmi's gaily shouted greeting.

"Did you have a good time, Sharada?" she asked her friend when she strolled over to see her, when it was nearly dusk.

"Fair," she answered shortly.

"Why? Wasn't it fun?"

"Not much," Sharada admitted. "Maybe we were all trying too hard to be happy. Fun gets tiresome if you have too much of it. And I kept thinking, too, how hard my mother must be working without

me. I really didn't enjoy myself at all. And when I got home I found that Jayashree, who wasn't asked because she was too little, had been helping mother nicely and they had a little picnic of their own out in the garden and such a happy time!"

"Why, that's funny. I was happy too!" Lakshmi exclaimed, as if she hadn't thought of it before. "I was too busy to ask myself if I was happy, but now I see I really did enjoy every minute of the afternoon."

"I wonder why you did and I didn't," Sharada said slowly. "Could it be that people can't catch happiness when they try, and then find it perched like a bird on their shoulder when they aren't looking for it?"

"I couldn't answer that one," said Lakshmi laughingly, and the girls parted for the night.

That evening when Sharada and her mother sat talking together, she put the question to her mother, wording it a little differently, for she had been turning it over in her mind since she had talked with Lakshmi.

"Could it be because Lakshmi and Jayashree were doing what they thought was right, and I was only thinking of having fun?"

"What do you think, Sharada?"

"I think that must be the answer, Mother, but, if you knew it, why didn't you tell me not to go?"

"For one thing, dear, I was remembering that Mr. Judge had said that even if one could value attractions at their own worth he was not called upon to blight other people's enjoyments. He said, too: 'Their time will come, as yours has, so hasten it for them if you can, by making life brighter, more joyous, better.' But if I had told you not to go would you have learned the lesson that you say you have learned?"

"N-o," she answered honestly. "I guess I'd have been so sorry that I wasn't allowed to go when I wanted to, that I shouldn't have enjoyed myself at all at home! Anyway, I've learned that if I want to be happy I have to do my duty and to be helpful."

"That's only half the lesson, dear. Would you like to hear what H.P.B. said about that, Sharada?"

"Oh yes, please, Mother!"

Her mother took down from the shelf her well-worn copy of *The Key to Theosophy,* and read: "The object of doing our duties to all men and to ourselves the last, is not the attainment of personal happiness, but of the happiness of others; the fulfilment of right for the sake of right, not for what it may bring us. Happiness, or rather contentment, may indeed follow the performance of duty, but is not and must not be the motive for it."

"Does it mean that we have to forget about being happy ourselves and only do what we think is right and will help other people?"

"That's the way I understand it, dear."

"Well, it seems to me that's just the way you act all the time, Mother. And you seem happy too. Then I guess I was partly right, wasn't I, when I told Lakshmi that perhaps people couldn't catch

happiness when they tried to? It would fly away like a bird. But perhaps when they weren't looking for it they might find it perched on their shoulder!"

"That is one way of putting it, I think."

"Well, it isn't going to be easy Mother, but honestly I'll try!"

The influence of mind over the body is so powerful that, while on the one hand, "with expectancy supplemented by faith, one can cure himself of almost any morbific condition" (*Isis Unveiled,* I. 216), on the other hand, through self-hypnosis, one can endure a living death, wasting physically and sometimes becoming an imbecile.

Many cases have been reported of Australian aborigines who, when haunted by fear that a curse has been laid on them by a witch-doctor, begin to sicken and ultimately die. One such instance was revealed to a coroner recently when he inquired into the death of an aboriginal woman named Maisie at Tennant Creek (*The Times of India,* November 15th, 1959). Maisie's husband, Snowy, said that events that led to Maisie's death began two years ago when he took two native boys on a hunting trip. The day was intensely hot, the party ran out of water, and the two boys died. Blame centred on Snowy and he and Maisie were convinced that tribal witch-doctors had put a curse on them. So, when Maisie died for no known medical reason, Snowy said that "a spirit stone had grabbed her heart." Snowy is convinced that he too will soon be dead.

In the Summer 1959 issue of *Tomorrow,* under the title "Aborigines Who Sing People to Death!" Nicholas Wainwright describes other cases of a similar nature. Each eligible girl, for instance, must marry the man chosen for her by the chief of the tribe. If she refuses, or marries someone else, the *kurdaitcha* or witch-doctor will lose little time in "singing her to death." Before a piece of magic bone, he chants daily these words: "May your blood turn to stone. May your bones become rotten and crumble." The person at whom the bone has been pointed, we are told, soon starts to sicken and eventually dies.

According to A. P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the Sydney University and authority on aboriginal customs,

> there is usually nothing at all wrong with the victims, and although doctors might be able to combat the physical symptoms of the sickness, they are powerless to fight the psychological effect of the curse. In his opinion the only cure is for their medicine man to convince them that the curse has been lifted. In other words, it is a case of mind over matter.

Obviously this is faith killing. The victim, absolutely certain of his own demise, never thinks there is the slightest hope for him, and nothing much can be done to help him.

VIRAGA—HIGHER INDIFFERENCE

The Voice of the Silence defines *Viraga* as "indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived." It is the golden key to pass "the Portal of temptations which do ensnare the *inner* man" on the hard and thorny way to Jnana. *Viraga* makes the spiritual aspirant safe "when crossing to the nearing 'Gate of Balance.'"

Viraga is described as Higher Indifference to distinguish it from indifference of the lower type. *Tamas,* which is the lower indifference, is "the deluder of all creatures." Says the *Gita*: "The abstention from works which are necessary and obligatory is improper; the not doing of such actions is due to delusion springing from the quality of *tamas.*" Running away from the field of duty and abandoning the works to be performed is the result of *tamasic* indifference. But the possession of *Viraga* enables one to be in the world and in the body but not of the world and of the body. "Repose on eternal Truth" produces the higher indifference.

Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* (Book I, verse 16) describe *Viraga* accurately: "Dispassion, carried to the utmost, is indifference regarding all else than the soul, and this indifference arises from a knowledge of soul as distinguished from all else." Shankaracharya denominates Right Knowledge of objects as the cause of Indifference (*Aparokshanubhuti,* verse 5). He explains in verse 106 of the same treatise that "the abandonment of this illusion (of form and name) by the recognition of the non-material, ever enlightened Brahma everywhere, is *Tyaga,* honoured by the great." H.P.B. brings out this idea by saying: "The mind must remain blunt to all but the universal truths in nature, lest the 'Doctrine of the Heart' should become only the 'doctrine of the Eye,' (*i.e.,* empty exoteric ritualism)" (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism,* second ed., p. 20). It is the complete realization of the True and the Real in man and in nature that results in the shedding of all illusions, including that of separateness. To possess an attitude of Higher Indifference, one must fix his eyes on that "Star above the storm," the luminous Self within.

In more than one place in *The Secret Doctrine,* we find H.P.B. explaining the illusive character of objects and of the world itself in relation to the Supreme Reality. A study of pages 39-40, 274, 295-296 and 329-330 of Volume I, for instance, will enable the reader to grasp fully that

> everything is relative in this Universe, everything is an illusion. But the experience of any plane is an actuality for the percipient being, whose consciousness is on that plane; though the said experience, regarded from the purely metaphysical standpoint may be conceived to have no objective reality. (*S.D.,* I. 295-96)

To have knowledge of *things-in-themselves,* the perceiving Ego

must be freed from the thraldom of the senses. Only then can it scale the peak of Omniscience.

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings... (*S.D.*, I. 40)

In view of the fact that everything is relative in this world, the spiritual aspirant has to cultivate a "calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions" (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 2). *Viraga* is, therefore, the attunement of the senses, emotions and mind to the Individuality (Atma-Buddhi-Manas).

The first two unnumbered rules of *Light on the Path* have a direct bearing on the correct understanding of *Viraga*. "Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness." These rules, we are told, "are merely the phrasing of laws in supernature, the putting into words truths as absolute in their own sphere, as those laws which govern the conduct of the earth and its atmosphere" (p. 35). The eyes are the windows of the soul and the ears are its gateways or doors. Through them comes knowledge of the confusion of the world.

> If grief, dismay, disappointment, or pleasure can shake the soul so that it loses its fixed hold on the calm spirit which inspires it, and the moisture of life breaks forth, drowning knowledge in sensation, then all is blurred, the windows are darkened, the light is useless. (*Light on the Path*, p. 38)

But it is the duty of the disciple not to allow his suffering to shake him from his fixed purpose. To be incapable of tears is to have attained an equilibrium which cannot be shaken by personal emotions. Such an equilibrium produces the feeling of absolute indifference to the objective universe and to pleasure and pain.

The real actor is the mind. It is useless, therefore, to abandon the outer field of action if the mind remains attached to it. Sri Krishna warns us against becoming false pietists of bewildered soul who keep the body inert, restraining the senses and organs, while at the same time pondering on objects of sense. The inward character of the man himself is the real test. If his inner nature has not changed, he will be the same man and whenever a temptation presents itself he will fall prey to it and his outward asceticism will avail him nothing. It is for this reason that Shankaracharya, in his *Vivekachudamani* (verse 71), insists upon "complete detachment of the mind from transitory objects." With a tranquil mind, one can be

both a renouncer of action and a devotee of right action. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:—

> The branches of a tree are shaken by the wind; the trunk remains unmoved.
>
> Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake. (p. 32)

The trunk (mind and soul) of the man of *Viraga,* rooted in Wisdom, remains unmoved while his senses and organs move by natural impulse to their appropriate objects.

A *Vairagi* is one who has become physically, mentally and morally indifferent and insensible to either pleasure or pain. He submits, if necessary, to what are called "pleasures and pains for all," but derives neither pleasure nor pain from such submission (*The Voice of the Silence,* p. 70 fn.). This ideal is well expressed in the following verse in the same treatise:—

> . . . thy Soul has to become as the ripe mango fruit: as soft and sweet as its bright golden pulp for others' woes, as hard as that fruit's stone for thine own throes and sorrows, O Conqueror of Weal and Woe. (pp. 65-66)

The cultivation of compassion for all and of sensitiveness to the sufferings of others is the concern of the true renouncer. Sri Krishna explains what is "disinterested forsaking" in Chapter XVIII of the *Gita*:—

> Deeds of sacrifice, of mortification, and of charity are not to be abandoned, for they are proper to be performed, and are the purifiers of the wise. But even those works are to be performed after having renounced all selfish interest in them and in their fruits; this, O son of Pritha, is my ultimate and supreme decision. (XVIII. 5-6)

Viraga or disinterested forsaking is "Resignation to the Supreme Soul" which, as explained by W. Q. Judge in *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali,* "is the consigning to the Divine, or the Supreme Soul, all one's works, without interest in their results."

The last word of perfected art and the first word of perfectible human nature are the same: *Abstain!*

—*The Path,* June 188

THE VOW OF SILENCE

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One, if not the greatest, of evils by which modern society is corrupted, is that of gossip. Injurious speech, or small talk ensouled by the spirit of competition, not only ruins other people's character, but corrupts our own. This is not recognized. Small talk has become and is studied as an art, and the infamy of gossip has emerged as an institution of social amusement. Its infamous nature is forgotten, its dire effects fail to impart their lesson and it has assumed for modern men and women the place of a necessity of life. Social avocations in cultured drawing-rooms as also in abusive slums pursue the path of small talk and mean gossip.

The first requirement of the spiritual life is to learn the value of silence. The conservation of spiritual energy demands that the frittering away of soul-forces be stopped. There are very few avenues through which man's divinity goes to waste as through sound and speech. The dirt and dregs of our kamic nature often find their outlet in useless or injurious speech. There is a close connection and more than mere metaphorical analogy in the statement which refers to what is put in the mouth as food and what comes out of it as words. Through the process of eating, assimilation of food and elimination of waste product take place; the health of the body improves or suffers with every morsel we take in. One of the main ways of determining the condition of the body is to examine the disposition of the process and product of elimination. Our psychic nature has its own ways of assimilation and elimination, of sustaining itself in good or ill health. One of the modes of elimination is related to the power of speech.

In spiritual growth, learning and listening go together; they precede teaching and speaking. In ancient India the moment the seeker of the peace of wisdom resolved to follow in the footsteps of the guru, the pupil gained the name of *Shravaka,* a listener. In ancient Greece he was named *Akoustikos.* He was not even permitted to ask questions; *bija-sutras,* seed-thoughts, were given him to ponder over and understand to the best of his ability. These thoughts were intended as purificatory food which, if adequately assimilated, would cleanse his kamic nature; not only remove the accumulated poisons of the past but reveal to the pupil the correct alchemical process of transforming within his own constitution passion into compassion, lust into love, antipathy into sympathy. Once started on this highway, he was ready to become an exerciser, a positive doer, *Shramana,* the *Asketos* of the Greeks.

Our modern Theosophical student has not fully recognized the occult significance of silence. A vow of silence does not mean to become mute and not to speak at all. It consists in: (1) self-imposition of

periodic silence; (2) not indulging at any time in injurious and untruthful speech; (3) not giving way to useless speech; (4) not asking questions on philosophy or practice till what has already been taught or is before us is fully scanned and thoroughly looked into from the point of view of our particular questions; (5) not indulging in *ahankaric* speech, *i.e.*, not making statements about the Divine Self or Ego in terms of our kamic or lower nature; (6) not indulging in injurious speech regarding our lower nature, our own faults and weaknesses, lest by speaking of them we lend them the strength which ensues from the power of speech; (7) not to speak even that which is true unless at proper times, to proper people, under proper circumstances.

While this sevenfold exercise is practised secrecy has to be observed about it. To refer to or speak about the exercise we have undertaken and are practising, is to vitiate it altogether and make it worse than useless. Such an indulgence gives birth to conceit and enhances it where it already exists. Secrecy and silence are needed and a contemplation on their kinship should precede the sevenfold exercise.

There is a general desire "to sit for meditation and to practise yoga," but this very first rule, this primary regulation, is found irksome and its desirability questioned. No doubt it is difficult, well-nigh impossible, for the moderns to attain this control over speech; but if not fully and wholly at least partly and partially it can be and should be practised.

Deliberate speech will be the first result. It will not be rooted in kama-passion, but in buddhi-compassion. There are two types of criticism: one is fault-finding; the other is the perception of virtue in meritorious expressions as also the perception of virtue behind vice demerit and weakness. The deceit of the dice is Sri Krishna, and the power to perceive that comes from the second type of criticism. The first is criticism by words of kama, the second is by words of understanding; the first is on the plane of words, the second on the plane of ideas; the first is of head-learning, the second of soul-wisdom; the first praises or condemns the lower nature, the second imports into it the strength of the higher, causing readjustment; the first has behind it the superior spirit of teaching, the second the sublime spirit of learning and propagating that which is learnt.

How different would be the world if even in some measure the power of this practice went into the doings of our civilization! Reviewers and critics would then not look for points to condemn, but for beauty and goodness and worth in the books they review. In all affairs of thought, feeling and action our tendency is to look for *our* thought repeated, *our* feelings reproduced, *our* actions imitated. We regard ourselves as the model for all examination; we the pattern whereby right and wrong is to be determined. Such an attitude is not blatantly expressed, but veils itself in a subtle form of humility, which is mock modesty.

There are a hundred who plunge into the waters of the ocean for

pleasure or profit to only one who dives for the pearl of great price. The latter proceeds to his work in the secrecy of silence and his art in the ocean is of a very different kind from that of the ordinary swimmer. Those who are in search of the pearl of wisdom must acquire the strength of muscle, the control of breath and the finesse of stroke necessary against the stormy billows of this ocean of *samsara*. These lie securely hidden in the Power of Silence. That power must be invoked, not by a pledge to some other being, but by a vow silently sung and silently registered in the sanctuary of the Heart. Thus the path begins in silence and secrecy and ends in the hearing and the chanting of the Soundless Sound.

—B.P.W.

The adoption of a resolution in the United Nations asking that the problem of juvenile delinquency "be given the urgent attention which its increasing gravity deserves" should do much to strengthen the stand of those who are expected to pilot the proposed Children's Bill (applicable in the first instance to Delhi) in the present session of the Indian Parliament. (*The Times of India*, November 24th, 1959)

The new measure is expected to regulate the care, protection and maintenance of neglected children and juvenile delinquents whose numbers have in recent years shown an alarming tendency to rise.

It is hoped that the framers of the new legislation will also provide for adequate restraint on those adults who exploit and employ young orphans and destitutes to steal, cheat and peddle narcotics, and who use them for all manner of other unlawful acts.

The attitude of the adult modern world is inappropriate to the demands of youth. Delinquent children compel the question: In what way can we consider ourselves more fit than they? These young delinquents exhibit our weakness; they have been forced into that position by adult selfishness. The solution of the problem lies in a change of attitude towards life on the part of adults — an inner change of motive and of goal.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

That almost all drugs have both life-giving and death-dealing properties is now being increasingly recognized and warnings are sounded that antibiotics, despite their outstanding record of usefulness, not being normal body substances but foreign materials, can act as killers in some cases. In "Warning Flag for Wonder Drugs" in the October 1959 issue of *Today's Health* (published by the American Medical Association), Albert Q. Maisel explains why doctors are going slow these days in prescribing antibiotics:—

> *No antibiotic yet developed is completely free from a tendency to produce, as a side effect, a toxic reaction.*... In the last 18 years scientists have isolated several thousand powerful new antibiotic substances. But despite their germ-killing potency, nine-tenths of these drugs have either never reached the market or have had to be withdrawn because they were unsafe for mass use. Even those which have been widely adopted still retain — as do all powerful drugs — some tendency to poison the patient as well as the germ.
>
> For example, if the amount and duration of treatment with streptomycin, dihydrostreptomycin, neomycin, and the new vancomycin are not strictly controlled, these drugs may attack the eighth cranial nerve, producing dizziness and ringing in the ears, even a prolonged impairment of hearing. Aureomycin, terramycin, tetracycline, and erythromycin may cause nausea or digestive distress, while neomycin and bacitracin may cause disturbances of kidney function....
>
> *Antibiotics may evoke allergic reactions ranging from hives to sudden death.* Our first exposure to an antibiotic may cause no visible damage. But if we are allergy-prone — and one in 10 is — once we are primed or sensitized to an antibiotic, any subsequent exposure may spell trouble. In some keenly sensitive people, the barest trace of an antibiotic may touch off a major reaction.... Penicillin — still our number one antibiotic — is the worst offender in provoking allergies...
>
> *Antibiotics may alter the natural germ balance in our bodies.* Millions of bacteria and fungi are always present in our mouths and throats, and in our intestinal tracts. Some of them are essential to the digestive process. Others, in the colon, manufacture certain essential vitamins. When we are well, these bacteria are in a natural balance. Even those that do us no direct good, at least do us no known harm. But when antibiotics are introduced into our systems, they kill off some of these microbes selectively and upset nature's delicate germ balance. Other microbes may then multiply at an explosive rate and make us the victims of so-called superinfections. Thus a form of pneumonia may actually develop as a result of penicillin treatment. When antibiotic lozenges are used, mouth sores may develop as a result of microbial overgrowth. Staphylococci may invade the intestinal tract, causing a raging bowel disease....

No antibiotic yet developed has been proved effective against the common cold, influenza, and viral — or atypical — pneumonia....

These are the major reasons why your doctor no longer uses antibiotics lightly as a "shotgun" treatment.

The effect of mental stress on bodily health was dealt with in these olumns only in our December issue. Dr. Robert H. Felix, M.D., Director f the National Institute of Mental Health and President-Elect of the merican Psychiatric Association, takes up the same subject under the itle "The High Cost of High Tension" in the *Parents' Magazine and amily Home Guide* for October 1959. Physical illness brought on by tress is no less "real" than any other kind and can certainly cause eal discomfort. So it cannot be pooh-poohed as "all in the mind."

Explaining how the stress that has become part of our lives brings n physical illness, Dr. Felix states:—

> Dr. Hans Selye, the great research scientist who made the basic discovery that stress causes enlargement and overactivity of the adrenal cortex, feels that body defences that are valuable to us in the short run may be harmful if they are used too strenuously, and cause certain diseases in the long run. (He calls these "diseases of adaptation.")...
>
> If you see a truck bearing down on you as you cross a busy intersection, for instance, what goes on inside of you? First, a signal that something is threatening you goes from your eye to your brain. There it is interpreted, checked in the light of past experience and a message warning "danger" goes out from the brain through two main pathways: your glandular system and your autonomic nervous system. It tells your pituitary or master gland to get busy. The pituitary, in turn, sends signals to your other glands. Your adrenal cortex goes to work and as the amount of hormones in your blood changes, the way you feel and act changes. Your whole body is alerted. Your heart pounds faster, you breathe more quickly, you sweat profusely. You are less aware — briefly — of fatigue. You function more swiftly and efficiently — and you bound out of the way of the truck.
>
> Your body responds generally to the *fear* of being struck just as it would have responded to the actual blow. So it stands to reason that if you fear or anticipate other kinds of injury — not just physical — there will be changes in the way your body functions. The lawyer who comes home after an exhausting day and faces continued tension in his home, or the clerk whose boss is constantly standing over him, or the mother who, torn between her baby's real demands and her excessive, painstaking efforts to keep her house spotless, can never let herself have any fun, endures *social* hurt. Each of these feels worried and harassed. Many changes go on inside his body — scientists are

just beginning to discover how many. Almost every one of the bodily systems is affected. The lawyer's blood pressure goes up. There is more acid in the clerk's stomach. The worried mother's back muscles begin to ache....

We human beings all have a weakest point... a spot of lowest resistance in our bodies.... I know a man who gets a sore throat when he is anxious, a woman who gets a painful bladder infection. Certainly you can't get these diseases without a germ. But germs have their best chance when our spots of lowest resistance are weakened by prolonged stress. This may happen because the nerve-gland machinery nature has given us to help us fight harm becomes exhausted if it has to work too long. The adrenal cortex may simply no longer be able to secrete the hydrocortisone which helps the rest of our body fight illness.

When a person is under stress too long, Dr. Felix suggests that three things can happen to him: he may develop psychosomatic sickness (a disorder of a body system), or an emotional disorder (a disorder in his thinking), or a disorder in his behaviour. Any one of these disorders may be cleared up, but if the stress that caused it is not relieved, it may lead to another kind of disorder.

The "cure" we can all give ourselves, though, is seeing that neither we nor our children have to live with tension around the clock. We *must* find time to relax, to take time off, to do the things we really enjoy. If a man has a heart attack and his physician orders him to take it easy, he does. But let a doctor tell a seemingly well man to stop bringing his briefcase home every night, or tell a mother to garden or dance or do something she really enjoys, and he usually gets a shrug....

We all need some stress to do our best. Nature has set up the physical reaction to stress to help us. And it does help us. It's when it goes on too long at too high a level that the help stops and damage begins. So for the long haul we need peace. We should try to live in such a way that we can have it.

Addressing a public meeting sponsored by the Rationalist Press Association in York, Ritchie Calder, the well-known science author made some important observations on "Science and the Citizen." "There is not the slightest doubt," he stated, quoting Sir James Gray, President of the 1959 British Association, "that the discoveries of physics have frightened mankind and there are too many intelligent people looking askance at science and wondering where it is leading."

As a member of the commission set up by the World Health Organization to study the mental aspects of atomic energy, Mr. Calder found out that people no longer trust the scientists, for on the

and they contradict one another on the great issues which involve he future of mankind, and on the other, when called upon to make ocial judgments they have made them at the behests of their political nasters.

It is the bounden duty of the scientist to give facts which only e knows at any given stage and to alert us as to their possible misuse. lis facts must be unencumbered by expediency or prejudice. He must e certain of his facts but he must not assume that they are the ltimate facts. He must learn humility and get rid of the sense of rrevocability.

Has the citizen no responsibility for the use or abuse of science? Ie has, but he does not have the knowledge to exercise it. According o Mr. Calder,

> in the age which is dominated by science, you have the ultimate direction of science, with its incalculable powers of good and evil, in the hands of people — statesmen, politicians, civil servants, and indeed boards of directors in industry — whose education has been designed to deprive them of knowledge of science.... More and more, with the right and proper demand for more and more career scientists and technologists and technicians we are teaching science but we are not teaching *about* science. We are not producing the educated person who, in a world in which his life and his livelihood is dominated by science, should exercise judgments about science.
>
> It is said that "Ignorance of the law is no excuse"; in this day and age "Ignorance of science is no excuse." The first does not mean that everyone has to be articled to a solicitor and the latter does not mean that everyone should have a B.Sc. It does mean that everyone should be aware of the implications of science.
>
> The good and evil of science are the head and tail of the same penny. By science we can transform the world for the better — abolish disease, misery, and hunger, bring a fullness of life to those now in abysmal poverty, bring food from the waste places of the hot deserts and the frozen Arctic. Yes, and we could feed the 4,000,000,000 people which the U.N. experts predict as the population twenty years from now. We can liberate ourselves from drudgery without ourselves becoming the slaves of the machine. Or we can by wantonness or from ignorance destroy mankind or distort Nature and the pattern of humanity.

In every country where private enterprise is permitted, a moral ligation rests on all the privately owned media of mass communiion, not only not to poison the wells of thought or debase moral andards, but also, as far as possible, to instruct and to elevate while teresting and entertaining. It is misconceived self-interest that from

time to time has blinded these trustees of the commonweal to the irrefutable proposition of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus that "that which advantages not the hive advantages not the bee," whether the offender has been press, cinema or radio or, more recently, television.

In *The Hindu* of November 5th appeared the protest of the American columnist, Mr. Walter Lippmann, against the "Disconcerting Trend in U. S. Television," which is understandably causing serious concern to leading thinkers who have their country's good at heart.

In the U.S.A., owners of television sets need pay no tax or fee, television networks being privately owned and depending on their advertisers for their income. These networks are reported to be competing fiercely for mass audiences, because it is held that the public response to the advertisements of their clients' products, in the programmes which the advertisers sponsor, will depend on the size of the audience. The industry, Mr. Lippmann writes, "has decided from its experience that the taste of great masses is a low one, and that to succeed in the competition it must pander to this low taste"— a deplorable decision which no country could view with equanimity.

Mr. Lippmann charges the television networks not only with debasing public taste, which is bad enough, but also with poisoning the innocent by the exhibition of violence, degeneracy and crime — and this during the evening hours, when audiences are largest. Surely it is not by pandering to a morbid craving for the sensational which is felt by the crudest layer of the population that the public taste can ever be raised! Doing so may not only further brutalize this sector of the population but may also debase the taste of many who today could appreciate better things.

Mr. Lippmann has nothing more drastic to suggest to remedy the evil he does well to deplore than a rival, subsidized and endowed television network which would aim, not at popularity and profit, but at excellence and the good life. This, he thinks, "if it enlisted the great talents which are available in the industry, but are now throttled and frustrated, might well attract an audience which made up in influence what it lacked in numbers."

We agree with him as to the great force of a good example, but might not the educating of public opinion to the point of boycotting offending television networks, and/or the products of firms featuring violence in the programmes which they sponsor, have a more immediate and lasting effect?